

What's the Risk?

Woodstove & Fireplace Safety



THE ISSUE

Woodstoves and fireplaces are a popular and sometimes efficient way to heat your home, especially in rural areas where other sources of energy may be scarce or expensive. However, woodstoves also pose a serious fire hazard if they are not properly installed, maintained, and used.



WHAT'S THE RISK?

According to the Canada Safety Council, woodstoves cause about 400 residential fires each year in Canada. Most of these fires are caused by improper installation, lack of maintenance, or careless use of the stove.



WHAT CAN BE DONE?

To prevent woodstove and fireplace fires you should follow these safety tips:

- Have your fireplace or woodstove and chimney inspected and cleaned by a professional at least once a year, or more often if you use your fireplace or woodstove frequently or burn softwood.
- Keep combustible materials such as carpets, drapes, furniture, paper, or logs at least 1 meter (3 ft) away from the stove.
- Use only dry, seasoned firewood that has been split and stored for at least one year. Avoid burning green, wet, or treated wood.
- Build small, hot fires that burn completely and produce less smoke and ash.
- Do not overload your stove or use flammable liquids to start or accelerate the fire.
- Never use your woodstove or fireplace to burn trash. Burning items that contain plastics (even plastic wrapping), treated paper or boxboard can overheat the appliance and the venting system which could lead to a fire.

